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## **President Ben Shelly Applauds Sacred Wind Communications for Providing Basic Phone and Internet Service to Navajo Residents**

**Nageezi, NM**—Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly applauded Sacred Wind Communications for completing their telecommunications network in the Eastern Navajo Agency at a Nageezi community celebration today. Basic landline phone service and high speed Internet was delivered to Nageezi and Huerfano Chapters using a combination of a fixed wireless tower and antenna to reach residents living in housing funded under the Navajo Housing Authority and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).



(L to R) Huerfano resident Mary Woody shared a laugh with President Ben Shelly who congratulated her as the first customer to receive the \$1 a month basic telephone service. Woody said it was her first time meeting the president.

“This new wireless system will help save Huerfano and Nageezi residents a considerable amount of gas and travel money, now families can do business online like take care of bills, kids can do their homework or parents can complete office work,” President Shelly told about 75 residents, state and local Navajo leadership. “Basic phone service is very important to our Navajo residents living in rural areas, especially when there is an emergency situation, and I applaud Sacred Wind Communications for their customer outreach services.”

Sacred Wind Communications built the same system to reach the HUD community at To’hajiilee last December, which was the first large community served by fixed wireless in New Mexico. Sacred Wind’s completed infrastructure allows service to over 1,500 additional unserved homes in 21 Navajo Chapters.

Attending the celebration was Huerfano resident Mary Woody, who said she had use the phone at her chapter house. “I had to walk half a mile almost every day just to use the phone, now I can call anyone for a ride or to just to talk to my family,” said Woody. Under the Tribal Lifeline Telephone Assistance Program, Woody pays \$1 a month for basic phone service.

Sacred Wind Communications Chief Operating Officer Jon Landstrom stated, “Mary was the first resident to receive her wireless home phone and in addition to the fixed wireless phone we installed at her home, we also installed a solar unit to power the phone since she has no electricity at her house.”

Nageezi Chapter President Ervin Chavez also welcomed Navajo Nation Council Speaker Johnny Naize and representatives from the offices of U.S. Senator Jeff Bingaman and U.S. Representative Ben Ray Lujan.

President Shelly concluded he has made technology one of his priorities, “Under the new leadership in Window Rock, we are moving the Nation forward into the technology era. I would like to see the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority, Frontier and Sacred Wind come together and talk about how to further serve the best interests of the Navajo people.”

Sacred Wind Communications is a privately owned, New Mexico-based company, dedicated to improve telecommunications services to rural areas within New Mexico.